Beginning and Closing Ceremonies

Practice with an open heart, flexible body and a free mind

Bowing

A. When entering and leaving the Dojo
B. Formally before and after the training session
C. When addressing the Shihan or Sensei

Opening Ceremony

A. Instructor tells students to line up. Students line up in *seiza no kamae* (proper kneeling posture) in order of rank.
B. Hands form *gassho* (placing palms together out in front of chest).
C. Posture, centering yourself and breath control are intricate in the bowing process. Breathing three deep breaths in the style of the Hong Sau breathing pattern clears the mind. Lengthen the body from the root of the spine to crown of the head will improve your taijutsu training. Also see the San-aun practices in the Togakure Ninpo Taijutsu Book.

1. Instructor may ask for a moment of meditation or will begin right away by saying *"Shikin Haramitsu Daikomyo"* (within all things lies the possibility for enlightenment: may every encounter bring me closer to the light). Students repeat *"Shikin Haramitsu Daikomyo*."
2. Class claps twice in unison with the Instructor.
3. Bow, placing hands on ground in front of you (left then right although almost simultaneously). This bow is
4. called *za rei* or seated bow.
   After rising from the bow, clap once in unison.
5. Instructor will then turn towards class and bow saying, "*Onegai shimasu*". Remain in *seiza*, bow to the
6. teacher repeating "*Sensei, One gai Shimasu*" meaning please assist me.
   Class training will begin.
7. Closing Ceremony

A. Instructor will call the students to attention. Students again line up in *seiza* as in the opening ceremony.

B. Bowing out procedure:

1. Instructor says, "*Mokusoo*" (begin meditation). Students close their eyes for a few moments of quiet introspection. When the instructor says, "*Yame*", this is the end of the meditation. Open your eyes.
2. Repeat the bowing in procedure except after bowing to the instructor say, "*Sensei, Domo Arigato Gozaimashita"* (Thank you very much).
3. Instructor asks if there are any questions. At this time any students with questions about class or Bujinkan functions should bring them up so the entire class may benefit.
4. Instructor says "*Oyasumi Nasai*" (have a good night). Formal class is now ended. This is a good time to take care of dues or other business matters with the instructor in charge.